

## President's Report for 2022

Good evening and welcome once again to historic Gettysburg. It is my sincere hope that many of you took advantage of some of today to explore the history surrounding this place. I hope you are enjoying the Wyndham. I want to thank PISI/AMBA for hosting our reception and dinner, they will also be hosting breakfast tomorrow. True Hearing is also helping to offset some of our expenses, and I want to acknowledge them for that assistance. We have numerous items on the agenda so I will be brief in my "State of PARSE" remarks.

Let me introduce our officers:

Allan Hansen – Vice President/Treasurer, as you know Allan is stepping down after many years of service to PARSE. We thank Allan for his time with PARSE and wish him well.

Vickie Bailey – State Secretary

Judy Janis – Administrative Assistant

Jodi Boal – Fiscal Assistant

Central Region VP – Paul Miller

Northeast Region VP – Jack Quirk

Norwest Region VP – Dr. James Godlewski

Southeast Region VP – Mike Gart.

Southwest Region – Tom Buerkle.

I also want to thank Evelyn Trent who will serve as parliamentarian. The work of the members of the Audit, Benefits, Bylaws, and Finance committees are also essential to PARSE and their efforts are acknowledged. Similarly, I want to acknowledge the dedication of all the chapter officers.

Covid unfortunately continues to be an issue and I ask all of you to remain vigilant.

In brief some PARSE highlights:

1. It's our 50<sup>th</sup> meeting and I am certain those who started PARSE would be pleased to see how the organization has progressed.
2. In July we moved to a new State Office location. You can see from the pictures posted that this a newer building and is well maintained. Our new offices had all new paint, ceiling tiles, carpet and tile installed before we moved. The staff are all enjoying this new space and it also has easy access from the turnpike for anyone coming to a meeting at the State Office.
3. We crossed the 32,000-member threshold at the end of 2021. We had an overly ambitious goal of 35,000 members this year. I appreciate the efforts some of the

chapters made to contact those who had not responded to either the original invoice or the reminder invoice. We continue to collect more 2022 dues as insurances are renewed. I want to thank PISI/AMBA for their efforts to recruit new members. While not at 35,000 members we are still ahead of membership at this time last year and I am confident we will have a new record high membership.

4. We worked with Davis Vision on a new contract. The goal was to get the best package for our members and a long-term contract. Allan and the Benefits Committee will provide more details on the effort, I think you will all be pleased with the results.
5. We held regional meetings again this year using a combination of Zoom and conference calls, while it was not as ideal as an in-person meeting it provided an opportunity to get the officers in each region together. We anticipate returning to live regional meetings in 2023.
6. We had over 8,000 members use the on-line payment option for dues this year. Once again, the State Office absorbed the costs associated with an online transaction (almost \$1) and we will do the same in this year. We are implementing changes to that system to hopefully make it easier for more people to pay dues on-line.
7. The Audit Committee did perform an audit for 2021, Tom Hoffman will be presenting that report. I thank Tom and his team for their efforts.
8. PARSE finances remain solid and as a result dues remain at \$20 for next year and the following 3 years as you might note on the projected budgets. A member of the Finance Committee will present the budget for the next fiscal year.
9. You voted last year to return to Gettysburg for a third year so we will return to Gettysburg in 2023. We will start to explore options for 2024.
10. Our Government Relations advisor, NOVAK Strategic Advisors, has been keeping us updated on any legislation that might be important to retirees. I hope that you have found their monthly reports interesting and useful. A member of the NOVAK team will speak at your chapter meetings on request.
11. I know that the PISI/AMBA team of benefit advisors have attended numerous meetings at the chapter level. The feedback I have received on these has been very positive with the presenters' reviewing products and being available after the meetings for one-on-one consultation.
12. We will share with all the chapters the information presented by the Office of Administration. Once again, I will repeat the admonition for any of your members who call about dropping the PARSE dental and vision plans as well as the Commonwealth medical insurance, I would advise you to encourage them to look very closely at those plans and to not only compare costs but most importantly coverages. I am sure you have all seen some of the commercials or received mail for Medicare supplement plans that also include dental, vision and hearing. Some of them advertise \$0 cost, look at the details please.

13. Another item is something we hear about regularly and that is when will we get a COLA. I have addressed this several times in the Newsletter and other communications to members. We have attempted to explain the unfunded liability, but some don't want to accept that reality. Others thought that some of the stimulus money the Commonwealth received should go to a COLA, that was excluded in the way the stimulus laws were written. We all have seen the poor performance in the markets this year and that too has a major impact on the stability of the fund, a recent article in the WSJ indicated that public pension funds lost a median 7.9% for the period that ended on June 30. In the July NOVAK report, I highlighted that in the new budget the pension funds (SERS and PSERS) were fully funded, this is what is needed if the pension funds are to someday become financially stable. When I meet with leaders on the hill, I stress the need to maintain the contributions to the pension fund as well as appropriating funds for our medical benefits which as you know are not guaranteed.
14. Covid has disrupted our lives and normal routines. Chapter meetings were not held, with some exceptions, for a long time. Many chapters have resumed meetings, but some have not. Find ways if you are not meeting to engage your members so they don't forget about PARSE.
15. Some items we want to work on in the next year are:
  - (1) The addition of an on-line application, many new retirees are accustomed to doing everything online and we want to look to accommodate that growing demand, we are discussing a joint effort with PISI/AMBA.
  - (2) Engage an outside consultant to help us develop sound financial practices and money management in preparation for an outside audit should that be recommended.
  - (3) At the Chapter level I would encourage you to look at ways to engage, what I call the young retirees, those just retiring. Meetings and lunches may not be what is of interest to them. We know many become members just for dental and vision but why not call new members as you receive their information from the State Office and see what they might like?

In closing let me acknowledge that we are all here because we care about PARSE both now and more importantly for the future. As we have discussions please respect one another and keep in mind the big picture of what is best for PARSE both now and for the next 50 years.